



Ethical assignment

TDP013 - Webbprogrammering och interaktivitet

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1 Introduction

This report is intended on using the Gibbs reflection model to analyse the ethical stance of Google. In this report only the first 3 steps laid out in Gibbs reflection model will be used for the analysis. The Googles business code of conduct will be used for the purposes of this analysis [1].

2 Description

The ethical goals and considerations that are described in Google code of conduct [1] includes the necessity to follow the law, to act with integrity, to avoid unsavory or illegal acts, to act with transparency and honesty. The guidelines pays extra attention to make clear that company and employee actions should follow anti trust laws, to avoid insider trading, to prevent bribery, and maintaining Googles reputation through ethical business decisions. The famous "Don't be evil" [1] is a fundamental principle encourages Googles employees to act fairly and report misconduct when they observe it .

In general these goals align with how google is perceived. Google is known for being innovative and simultaneously striving to maintain high ethical standards, both in how they treat their employees and how they act in the market. However there have been multiple business scandals for Googles most recent of which is the recent US department of justices antitrust suit against Google [2]. This particular case is interesting given that Google code of conduct expressly forbids "using Google's size or strength to gain an unfair competitive advantage" [1]. Scandals like these may be damaging for the company reputation, how ever Googles reputation among consumer is still perceived as a company to have a strong profile in following laws and regulations, and it has a good reputation for protecting users' data and security. Principles like "don't be evil" underscore the company's commitment to ethical behavior.

A situation that the U.S. Department of Justice has alleged to have happened is Google using its size and wealth to pay other companies and its own subsidiaries (such as Android) to have the Google search engine be the default option. This practice raises ethical concerns related to fair competition, transparency, and the potential for anti-trust violations.

3 Reaction

Employees should adhere strictly to Google's code of conduct, which emphasizes fair competition, transparency, and ethical business practices. This means avoiding actions that could be seen as anti-competitive or unethical.

Given the complexity of this situation, i would likely act in a way that I would later regret, as has been described by previous people [3]. I would probably keep my head down, complete the work, and later come to regret my actions. At most, I might quietly complain to my manager and then move on with my work. At least if my position was that of a developer. How i would act would likely differ based on the relevant position that i inhabit at the relevant time.

4 Valuation

The code of conduct is clearly articulated and grounded in widely recognized principles of legality, integrity, and responsible conduct. These ethical objectives are straightforward and can be easily applied in various business contexts.

The meanings of the different goals are well-defined. Each section of the document includes specific examples of permissible and prohibited actions, as well as expectations for employees in different scenarios.

The ethical objectives outlined in the documents align with overarching professional ethical standards that advocate for justice, legality, transparency, and responsible behavior, as highlighted in [4]. They stress the significance of making ethical choices even in the absence of immediate rewards, which resonates with the expectations placed on professionals in many fields.

References

- [1] Alphabet Inc., “Google code of conduct,” <https://abc.xyz/investor/google-code-of-conduct/#top>, Accessed: September 25, 2024.
- [2] U.S. Department of Justice, “Justice department statements on u.s. district court for the district of columbia’s decision in u.s. v. google,” <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-statements-us-district-court-district-columbias-decision-us-v-google>, Accessed: September 25, 2024.
- [3] B. Sourour, “The code i’m still ashamed of,” <https://medium.com/free-code-camp/the-code-im-still-ashamed-of-e4c021dff55e>, Accessed: September 25, 2024.
- [4] Association for Computing Machinery , “Acm code of ethics and professional conduct,” <https://www.acm.org/code-of-ethics>, Accessed: September 25, 2024.